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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF SEVENOAKS

Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for

1947

together with the

Report of the Sanitary Inspector

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Urban District Council of Sevenoaks

R E P O R T

FOR THE YEAR 1947

on the

Sanitary Conditions and
Vital Statistics of the
Sevenoaks Urban District

by the

Medical Officer of Health

Together with the Report
of the Sanitary Inspector

Urban District Council of Sevenoaks

HEALTH REPORT FOR 1947.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Health Report for the year 1947, this being the twenty-fifth one submitted by me as your Medical Officer of Health.

The population of the District, as estimated by the Registrar-General at mid-year, was 14,550 as compared with 14,150 last year.

An increase again took place in the Birth Rate, this being equal to 20·6 per thousand of population as against 18·5 last year.

The Death Rate for the year was equal to 11·1 per thousand of population, as compared with 12·2 last year and 13·3 in 1945.

The Infantile Mortality Rate was equal to 6 per thousand registered births, as against 19 last year and 47 in 1945. This Rate is liable to fluctuation owing to the small numbers involved.

During the year 55 Certificates of Notification of Infectious Disease were received, as compared with 118 last year. The diseases accounting for the largest number of Certificates were Measles 39 and Scarlet Fever 6.

As this is the last Report which I shall have the honour to submit to you, I should like to place on record my very high appreciation of the kindness and consideration that I have invariably received from all members of the Council; and I should also like to thank, very heartily, all the Council's Officers, who, without exception, have been most helpful and considerate to me in my work. It is with great regret that I relinquish my post, which I have held for some 25 years, and I wish to express my best wishes for the well-being and happy development of the District.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

P. N. CAVE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Urban District Council of Sevenoaks

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman - - Mrs. M. E. DAVIS, J.P.

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

REPRESENTATIVES ON THE HOSPITAL AND CHILD WELFARE SUB-COMMITTEE.

Mrs. M. E. DAVIS, J.P.

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G. P. KING, Esq.

Mrs. E. S. VINER.

Mrs. M. JERWOOD (Chairman).

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H. F. PAGE, Esq.

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Mrs. M. JERWOOD.

Mrs. E. S. VINER.

REPRESENTATIVE ON THE SEVENOAKS DISTRICT NURSING ASSOCIATION.

Mrs. E. S. VINER.

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health:

P. N. CAVE, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector:

W. J. GYPPE, C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

General Assistant:

S. C. CLARK.

Clerk:

Mrs. M. KNOWLES.

Health Visitor:

Miss M. SHIEL, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.

Assistant Health Visitor:

Mrs. E. STRANGE, S.R.N., S.C.M. (part-time).

Clerk to Health Visitor:

Mrs. I. DANIELS.

STATISTICS & SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	3,720
Registrar-General estimate of population, mid-1947	14,550
Number of occupied houses, December, 1947 ...	4,344
Rateable Value, December, 1947	£175,099
Sum represented by a penny rate, December, 1947...	£683

VITAL STATISTICS.

					Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population.
		Total.	M.	F.	
Legitimate	288	154	134		
Illegitimate	12	5	7		
	-----	-----	-----		
Total	300	159	141		20.6
	-----	-----	-----		
					Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births.
Stillbirths	5	3	2		16.3
	-----	-----	-----		
					Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population.
Deaths	162	57	105		11.1
	-----	-----	-----		
Deaths from puerperal causes:					
Puerperal sepsis ... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil
Other puerperal causes ... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:					
All infants per 1,000 live births (2) ... ..	...	...	...	...	6
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births (1) ...	...	...	...	...	3
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births (1)	...	...	...	...	83
Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ... ..	...	...	...	...	23
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... ..	...	...	...	...	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ... ..	...	...	...	...	Nil

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.—During the year 1947, 300 Births were registered, of which number 159 were males and 141 were females. This is equal to an Annual Birth Rate of 20·6 per thousand of population as against 18·5 last year.

Deaths.—The number of Deaths registered during the year as belonging to the District was 162 (57 males and 105 females). This gives a Death Rate of 11·1 per thousand of population, as compared with 12·2 last year.

Infantile Mortality Rate.—During the year 2 deaths were registered in Infants under one year of age. The Infantile Mortality Rate was therefore equal to 6 per thousand registered births, as against 19 last year.

				Sevenoaks Urban District.	England and Wales.
Birth Rate	...	...	...	20·6	20·5
Death Rate	...	...	...	11·1	12·0
Infantile Mortality Rate	...			6	41

BIRTH-RATES, CIVILIAN DEATH-RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL MORTALITY and CASE-RATES for certain Infectious Diseases in the Year 1947.
Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns.

	England and Wales	126 County Boro's and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Popula- tions 25,000 to 50,000) at 1931 Census	London Administrative County	Sevenoaks Urban District
	Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population				
BIRTHS:					
Live	20.5	23.3	22.2	22.7	20.6
Still	0.50	0.62	0.54	0.49	0.34
DEATHS:					
All Causes	12.0	13.0	11.9	12.8	11.1
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Scarlet Fever	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Whooping Cough	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	—
Diphtheria	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	—
Influenza	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.06
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	—
Measles	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.06
	Rates per 1,000 Live Births				
Deaths under one year of age	41	47	36	37	6
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under two years of age	5.8	8.0	3.7	4.8	—
	Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population				
NOTIFICATIONS:					
Typhoid Fever	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	—
Paratyphoid Fever	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.05	—
Scarlet Fever	1.37	1.54	1.37	1.31	0.41
Whooping Cough	2.22	2.41	2.02	2.80	0.20
Diphtheria	0.13	0.15	0.14	0.14	—
Erysipelas	0.19	0.21	0.18	0.22	0.06
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	—
Measles	9.41	9.13	9.58	5.29	2.62
Pneumonia	0.79	0.89	0.68	0.64	0.13
	Rates per 1 000 Total Births (i.e. Live and Still)				
NOTIFICATIONS:					
Puerperal Fever	} 7.16	8.99	6.27	1.21	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia				6.94*	

A dash (—) signifies there were no deaths.

* Including Puerperal Fever.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following Table shows the number of cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year, together with the number removed to hospital and the deaths registered:—

Disease	Number notified	Removed to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	6	4	...
Erysipelas	1	...	...
Acute Poliomyelitis	4	3	...
Pneumonia	2	...	4*
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1	...
Whooping Cough	3	...	...
Measles	39	...	1
TOTALS	56	8	5

* All forms of Pneumonia.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

The following work has been done in connection with the immunisation of children against Diphtheria:—

Number of sessions held	...	...	...	...	7
Number of new cases treated during the year	...	...	...	...	149
Total attendances	...	...	...	...	298

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

No cases were notified during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following Table shows the number of new cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year, together with the number of deaths registered:—

	Notified			Deaths		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Pulmonary . .	8	6	14	1	2	3
Non-Pulmonary	1	—	1	—	1	1
Total	9	6	15	1	3	4

Treatment for cases of Tuberculosis is under the control of the Kent County Council, and during the year the following number of patients from this District have received treatment:—

Number receiving sanatorium treatment	38
Number receiving dispensary treatment	47
Dispensary supervision only	102

PUBLIC HEALTH (PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS) REGULATIONS, 1930.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936 (Section 176).

No action was required under the above during the year.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

During the year the following number of patients were admitted to the Isolation Hospital:

Scarlet Fever	4
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	3

LABORATORY WORK.

The Kent County Laboratory, Maidstone, carries out the bacteriological work in connection with this District, and during the year the following number of specimens have been examined there:—

	Positive	Negative	Total
Sputa for Tubercle	8	—	8
Faeces - Salmella Bareilly	3	—	3
Totals...	11	—	11

DRAINAGE.

There has been no material change in the drainage system during the year.

During the year, 602 feet of 6in. soil sewer was laid for the Solefields Road Housing Scheme.

No additions have been made to the surface water sewers.

SANITARY STATISTICS.

No. of Houses connected to the sewer	No. of Houses not connected to sewers	No. of Houses not provided with a piped water supply	No. of wells still in use for the purpose of domestic supply
4216	138	Nil	Nil

SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

W.C's	Pail or Pan Closets	Midden Privies	Ashpits separate from Midden Privies	Cesspools	
				No. of	No. of houses connected
6,123	2	2	—	130	138

WATER SUPPLY.

During the year the following extensions to the water mains were carried out by the Sevenoaks Waterworks Company:—

The Rise, Sevenoaks	195 yards of 6in. main.
White Hart Estate (Weald Road to The Rise)	652 yards of 6in. main.

The water supply has been satisfactory both as regards quality and quantity.

During the year 11 samples of water were collected from various domestic supplies and submitted for bacteriological examination. The results in all cases were satisfactory.

All the houses in the District are supplied by the public mains: (a) 4,349 direct to houses, and (b) 5 to standpipes, the latter supplying 16 persons.

HOUSING.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year.

(1) (a) Total number of houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts)	37
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	82
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head 1 above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	11
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	30
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1
(4) Number of houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	33

2.—Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	20
--	----

3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

- (a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	<i>Nil</i>
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
By owners	<i>Nil</i>
By Local Authority in default of owners	<i>Nil</i>
(b) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts:	
(1) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	4
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	<i>Nil</i>
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	<i>Nil</i>
(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made...	<i>Nil</i>
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ...	<i>Nil</i>
(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	<i>Nil</i>
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	<i>Nil</i>

4.—Housing Act, 1936, Part IV: Overcrowding.

(a) (i) Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year	2
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ...	5
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ...	19

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	4
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	6
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	41
(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	<i>Nil</i>
Number of new houses erected during the year:	
By the Council	88
By other persons	41

HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION.

No change took place during the year either in the method of collection or disposal of house refuse.

CESSPOOL EMPTYING.

The contents of cesspools are emptied by the Council's cesspool emptier at the request of the householder concerned.

HEALTH VISITOR.

The Council employs one full-time Health Visitor, who works under the supervision of the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year she has paid the following number of visits:—

Primary visits	330
Re-visits	1,347
Visits <i>re</i> Infectious Disease	30
Miscellaneous visits	90
	<hr/>
	1,797
	<hr/>

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN.

Number of persons who gave notice under section 7 (3) during the year	10
Total number of children in respect of whom notice was given under section 7 (3) during the year	10
Under supervision at the end of the year	6

CHILD LIFE PROTECTION.

Individual foster-mothers	...	...	...	...	...	10
Number of children under 9 years of age:						
Received during the year	...	...	...	...	...	2
At end of the year	...	...	...	...	...	3

INFANT WELFARE CENTRES.

Number of names on the register:						
Mothers	...	...	...	...	...	460
Children	...	...	...	...	...	691
Number of attendances:						
Children	...	...	...	...	...	8,928
Number of sessions held	...	...	...	...	...	101
Average attendance per session	...	...	...	...	...	90

ANTE-NATAL AND POST-NATAL CLINICS

The following work has been done in connection with the Ante-natal and Post-natal Clinics during the year:—

	Ante-natal Clinic.	Post-natal Clinic.
Total number who first attended	169	30
Total attendances	229	45
Number of sessions held	36	12

SUNLIGHT TREATMENT.

The following work has been done in connection with the Sunlight Clinic during the year:—

Number of sessions held	...	...	...	12
Number of treatments given	...	...	...	174
Number of children treated	...	...	...	43

HOME HELPS.

The number of Home Helps employed at the end of the year were three full-time and two part-time.

During the year 31 maternity cases and 55 domestic (emergency) cases were served.

NURSING AND MATERNITY HOMES.

The powers under the Public Health Acts, 1936, relating to Nursing Homes has been delegated to the District Council by the County Council.

There are three registered premises within this District, which provide 8 beds for maternity cases and 9 beds for other cases.

VOLUNTARY HELPERS.

I have again much pleasure in placing on record my high appreciation of the work done during the year under review by the voluntary workers associated with the Maternity and Child Welfare work carried out by the Council.

It is with deep regret, from the personal point of view, that I have to record that this will be the last complete year during which the Council will be responsible for this work, as under the National Health Service Act, 1946, from July 5th, 1948, the work will be under the administration of the Kent County Council. I have no doubt this change will not have any effect on the loyalty and keenness which the voluntary workers have always brought to bear in connection with their services so unselfishly rendered from year to year. I might add that it is very evident that their work and co-operation will be required more than ever under the new administration, and I sincerely trust that the Kent County Council will benefit from it at least to the same extent as have the Urban District Council in the past.

SCHOOLS.

There are four elementary schools within the District.

It was not found necessary to close a school on account of the prevalence of Infectious Disease.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

PART I

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	38	12	1	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	48	77	7	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out - workers' premises	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	86	89	8	—

2.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more "cases.")

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)...	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	1	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ((S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	3	1	—	2	—
(a) Insufficient	6	6	—	3	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ...	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	11	7	—	5	—

SUMMARY OF REGULATED TRADES.

	Number of Premises	Visits Paid	Defects.	
			Found.	Remedied.
Dairies	6	153	3	3
Cowsheds	2	25	4	4
Slaughterhouses	2	454	1	1
Bakehouses	7	80	3	3
Piggeries	—	—	—	—
Other food preparing places	96	605	22	22
Factories				
Power	48	77	8	8
Non-Power	38	12	2	1
Totals...	199	1406	43	42

MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS) ORDER, 1936.

The following number of licences were granted by the Council during the year:—

Dealer's Licences: Pasteuriser's Licence	1
Tuberculin Tested	2
Tuberculin Tested (to bottle) ...	1
Supplementary Licence: Tuberculin Tested	2
Pasteurised	1

MILK SUPPLY.

During the year the following number of samples were examined under the Milk (Special Designations) Order:—

Pasteurised	18
Accredited	3
Tuberculin Tested	15

With the exception of four samples of Tuberculin Tested milk, all samples satisfied the prescribed tests.

In addition, one sample of ordinary milk retailed in the area was examined and found to be satisfactory.

MEAT: CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed ...	1080	341	1125	4826	387
Number inspected ...	1080	341	563	2413	387
All diseases except Tuberculosis:—					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	—	—	—	1	2
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	325	2	2	42	37
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis ...	23.0	23.0	0.4	1.8	10.0
Tuberculosis Only:—					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	6	20	—	—	5
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	235	235	—	—	18
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	18.4	18.4	—	—	5.9

FOOD PREMISES.

There are 19 premises registered for the manufacture or sale of ice-cream, and 21 premises for the manufacture of preserved food under section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act. In addition, there are a number of food preparing places which do not require to be registered.

During the year 605 visits were paid to food preparing places, and 22 defects were recorded. All defects were dealt with by informal action.

Three samples of ice-cream retailed in the District were submitted for bacteriological examination, all of which proved satisfactory.

UNSOUND FOOD.

The total amount of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was 12 tons 13 cwt. 55 lbs. All condemned meat is dealt with through the salvage scheme of the Ministry of Food.

In addition to the above, 17 cwt. of other foods which was found to be unfit for human consumption was surrendered to the Public Health Department and passed through the salvage scheme.

SHOPS ACTS.

During the year 59 inspections were made under the Shops Acts, and 9 minor contraventions were dealt with satisfactorily.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are two private swimming baths in the District and one public swimming bath controlled by the Council.

During the year two samples of the water from the public baths were submitted for bacteriological examination, and both proved satisfactory.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No Council houses were found to be infested.

Three other houses found to be infested were dealt with by fumigation by Messrs. Cimex, Ltd. No recurrence was reported during the year.

CLEANSING OF PERSONS.

No work in connection with the Cleansing of Persons was carried out during the year.

DAY NURSERY.

The following are the particulars with regard to the Day Nursery:—

	0—2 years.	2—5 years.
Number of approved places ...	16	34
Number of children on register at end of the year	16	34

ADOPTIVE ACTS AND BYELAWS.

No Acts or Byelaws were adopted during the year.

DEATHS REGISTERED DURING THE YEAR 1947.

Cause of Death	Males.	Females.	Total.
Typhoid fever ... ..	...	...	...
Cerebro-spinal Fever ... ..	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever... ..	...	...	...
Whooping Cough ... ..	...	...	...
Diphtheria ... ..	...	...	...
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	1	2	3
Other Tuberculous diseases ...	...	1	1
Syphilitic diseases	1	...	1
Influenza ... ..	...	1	1
Measles ... ..	...	1	1
Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	..	...	...
Acute Infantile Encephalitis ...	...	...	...
Cancer of Bronchial Cavity ...	2	1	3
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	1	2
Cancer of the Breast ... ..	...	3	3
Cancer (all other forms)... ..	8	7	15
Diabetes ... ..	...	...	...
Inter cranial vasc. lesions ...	12	23	35
Heart disease... ..	14	29	43
Other diseases of circulatory system	3	5	8
Bronchitis	5	3	8
Pneumonia	1	3	4
Other respiratory diseases ... ..	...	4	4
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum...	...	...	...
Diarrhoea (under two years) ...	...	...	...
Appendicitis ... ..	...	...	...
Other digestive diseases	1	4	5
Nephritis ... ..	...	1	1
Post and post-abort. sepsis... ..	...	...	...
Other maternal causes ... ..	...	...	...
Premature Birth ... ..	...	1	1
Congenital malformation and birth injury	1	...	1
Suicide ... ..	...	...	...
Road traffic accidents	2	1	3
Other violent causes ... ..	...	1	1
All Other causes	5	13	18
TOTALS	57	105	162

Urban District Council of Sevenoaks

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Council Offices,
Argyle Road,
Sevenoaks.
1947.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of presenting to you a summary of the work carried out in the Public Health Department during the year 1947.

GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

The routine inspection work in the area has been carried out and many more visits were made to the various premises, which are subject to inspection under the various statutes, than in the previous year.

As in the past, special attention was paid to the two Government Slaughterhouses, Food Preparing Places, and the milk supplied in the town.

All defects detected in the course of inspections were dealt with by informal action, and it was only necessary to serve four Statutory Notices during the year.

The principal nuisances dealt with related to:—

1. Drainage and sanitary accommodation	54
2. Defective roofs and ceilings	25
3. Dampness and rainwater guttering	20
4. Refuse accumulations	18
5. Smoke observations	21
6. Sanitary dustbins	61

Thirty fumigations were carried out by the Department during the year, following the notification of Infectious Diseases, or at the request of residents.

Eight batches of bedding etc. were removed to the Council's Isolation Hospital for steam disinfection. The usual charges were made for this work and fumigations where the cases were not connected with notifiable Infectious Diseases.

Three cases of Bug Infestation were detected during the year. These were not of a severe character and were dealt with by fumigation and steam disinfection. No recurrence of the trouble has been reported.

NEW DRAINAGE.

The following new soil sewer was laid during the year in connection with the Council's Housing programme:—

602 feet in Solefields Housing Site.

No additional surface water sewers were laid during the year and no cesspools were provided for new properties.

WATER SUPPLIES.

The Sevenoaks Waterworks Co. report that the following extensions and work were carried out during the year:—

195 yards of 6in. main—The Rise.

652 yards of 6in. main—Weald Road to Tonbridge Road.

238 yards of 3in. main—to replace 2in. main, The Rise.

HOUSING.

The number of new houses erected in the area during the year was 129. Eighty-eight were erected for the Urban District Council and forty-one by private enterprise.

The work of re-housing of families by the Council in permanent and temporary accommodation, through the Housing Department, has been carried on, and the many cases of overcrowding which existed, especially immediately after the war period, have been considerably eased, but there are still many families who have come into the town who are sharing houses in the hope that some accommodation will be forthcoming for them.

Housing repair work has, naturally, been curtailed during the year, as new houses have, obviously, had priority and only urgent repair work has been insisted upon.

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTIONS.

Special attention was paid to the Food Preparing Premises in the town under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. A total of 605 visits were made and, in some cases, improved hygienic arrangements were brought into operation.

A considerable amount of time has been spent on this important branch of the Public Health work owing to the increased public feeding on these premises. On the whole I would assess the hygienic arrangements to be very fair, but I feel that there is still much work to be done in emphasizing to the proprietors, and particularly to all the employees handling food, the importance of improving and endeavouring to maintain a high standard of food hygiene.

ICE-CREAM.

Special attention was paid to the sale and manufacture of ice-cream, and the attention of all manufacturers was drawn to the Ice-cream (Heat Treatment etc.) Regulations dated 1947 made under the Food and Drugs Act.

Three samples were taken for examination during the summer and were found to be satisfactory.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

The two slaughter-houses under the control of the Ministry of Food have been in continual use during the year and continue to serve both the Urban and Rural areas.

As in previous years, I have paid special attention to the inspection of meat and other foods, and mutual co-operation has existed between my department and the manager of the slaughter-house appointed by the Ministry of Food. 454 visits were made to the slaughter-houses, and the bulk of the inspections were made after the slaughtering contractor had left the premises.

During the year the total amount of meat and offal condemned at the slaughter-houses was 12 tons 13 cwt. 55 lbs. Of this amount, 5 tons 4 cwt. 96 lbs. represented edible offal.

All condemned meat and offal was dealt with under the salvage arrangements of the Ministry of Food.

In addition to the above, 17 cwt. of other food which, upon examination, was found to be unfit for human consumption was surrendered to the Public Health Department and dealt with. This consisted of 1,022 tins of food, 17 lbs. of poultry, 1 cwt. 37 lbs. of fish, 5 cwt. 60 lbs. of dried fruit, and 1 cwt. 42 lbs. of confectionery.

Although much of our diet is canned in these days of austerity, it is pleasing to record, by comparison, the small percentage found to be unfit for sale.

MILK SUPPLIES.

The milk supplies to the town were kept under constant supervision. The bulk was derived from farms outside the area, and no complaint was received during the year in connection with the keeping quality of the milk.

There is one large pasteurising plant of the high temperature short time model, and frequent visits were made to this dairy to see that the plant was working to a high standard.

Of the many samples taken from this plant during the year, all were satisfactory and passed the phosphatase test.

178 visits were made to the dairies in the town, and three defects observed during the year, which were dealt with by informal action.

The following samples of milk were taken and submitted to the County Laboratories for examination under the Milk (Special Designations) Order:—

Pasteurised	...	...	...	...	...	18
Tuberculin Tested	...	...	...	...	...	15
Accredited	...	...	...	...	...	3

Four samples of Tuberculin Tested milk failed to comply with the prescribed conditions laid down in the Order, and, on each occasion, the matter was referred to the Public Health Department of the District in which the milk was produced and bottled. In all other cases the samples passed the prescribed test.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT.

I am pleased to record that no heavy major infestations were detected during the year.

283 visits were made by the Health Department, and the part-time Rodent Operator was employed in dealing with the minor infestations discovered. Generally, householders were keen to assist in this work and the business premises in the town have again been reasonably free of these pests. 72 infestations were dealt with and it is estimated that 1,400 rats were destroyed by the Rodent Operator during the course of the year.

In co-operation with the Surveyor's Department, the Refuse Tip has been under constant observation, and, at the end of the year, work was in hand to commence the testing of the main soil sewers for the presence of rats.

GENERAL.

The Council's General Purpose Ambulance has been maintained throughout the year on a 24-hour basis, and the service continued over the Urban and part of the Rural area in co-operation with the Sevenoaks Rural District Council.

There are 38 premises in the town licensed by your Council to store petrol under the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act. 133 visits were made to these premises during the year to ascertain that the conditions of storage were complied with.

The work under the Coal Distribution Order, 1943, which is administered by your Council and under which I act as Local Fuel Overseer, has been carried on under the various Directions laid down by the Ministry of Fuel and Power.

In conclusion, I should like to record my thanks to the staff in the Department who have assisted me in the work during the year.

SUMMARY.

In accordance with the Sanitary Officers Order, I give below the number and nature of inspections carried out during the year:—

Meat Inspections at Slaughter-houses ...	...	...	454
Inspections at Food Preparing Premises ...	...	...	605
Shops Acts Inspections ...	...	...	59
Petroleum Act Inspections ...	...	...	133
Factories Act Inspections ...	...	...	89
Bakehouse Inspections ...	...	...	80
Infectious Disease Visits ...	...	...	69
Dairy Inspections ...	...	...	178
Housing and Miscellaneous Visits ...	...	...	256
Infestation Order (Rats and Mice Destruction Act)			283
Visits to Nuisances and Drainage, etc. ...	...	...	89
Total ...			2,295
Informal Notices served ...			191
Statutory Notices served ...			4

